APPRAISING OF THE RELIGIOUS STATE OF NIGERIA IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIS IJIOMAH'S HARMONIOUS MONISM

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Abstract  
Nigeria as a multi-religious state is faced with a lot of religious problems that is detrimental to its unity, as well as peace and progress. The position of this paper is that the adherents of each of these religious groups tend to promote their religion and its tenets above those of others and the nation. Hence, they can do anything for their religious faith not minding the well-being of the nation. The rationale behind this, according to the paper, is due to faulty ontology. This ontology promotes fragmentation of the nation along religious lines since it is built on Western monism, which reduces reality into an aspect of reality. This type of mindset instigates most Nigerians to think that all must be converted to their own religion for them to be regarded as same rather other. This paper, therefore, opines that Nigeria can come out of this religious malaise if the principles of Ijiomah's ontology known as “Harmonious Monism” are employed to redefine the people's religious perspectives. This ontology is built on the principle of unification. Hence, based on this principle that unifies contraries or opposites within a whole, it is possible for members of various religious groups to co-exist in the entity called “Nigeria”. And this will in turn lead to peaceful co-existence and development of the nation since all religious adherents will see their religions as a necessary opposites that can co-exist and bring out a better understanding of each other’s faith which can be harmonized for the betterment of the nation. On the whole, this paper shall employ the methods of textual analysis, speculation and synthesis to put forward it thesis.

Key Words: Exclusivism, Harmonious Monism, Ijiomah, Religion, Religious Pluralism.

Introduction  
Religion is a social institution that is supposed to promote national unity, peace and progress, but the reverse is the case in Nigeria. S. P. I. Agi is of the view that religion has failed to meet its supposed objective, which is to unify people; it has rather divided them to the point that members of different religious groups see themselves as worst enemies. He captures this as follows:
The functionalist school of thought will have us believe that religion provides social consensus, and therefore contributes to social and cultural integration. However… threatening significant is the potency of religion as a divisive, rather than an integrating force. From time immemorial, events in different epochs and climes abound which inexorably point to the destruction which religion has unleashed on mankind. *(Holy Violence 58)*

This destructive effect of religion is due to interreligious as well as intra-religious strifes and conflicts, which have left many nations in an irreconcilable state of chaos and underdevelopment. It is in this light that Agi notes that “mystery or no mystery, many countries of the world have suffered, and still continue to suffer untold hardship and misery engineered by religious strife and acrimony” *(Holy Violence 58)*. Nigeria is not an exception to this problem caused by religious conflict. In Nigeria the case is so bad that there is collapse

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of socio-political order as well as senseless loss of lives and properties. It has also left scares and pains that will take years to heal and forgotten. The wounds inflicted are social in nature. Buttressing this point The Economist asserts that the social wounds it inflicts takes generations to heal (14), if only it is possible to get healed.

It is germane to note that in Nigeria, inter-religious violence is mainly between Christians and Muslims. This situation has made many to wonder how “the most atrocious cruelties of human nature can co-exist with the most sublime and refined system of religion” (Onaiyekan 363). The simple answer to this worry rests on the ontology that informs these religions. The ontology that inspires these two religions is one that has inherent tendency to bifurcate and polarize reality as well as elevate an aspect of such a reality to an absolute instance. It is this ontology that adherents of these religions bring to play as they relate with each other. It further instigates their desire to convert others into their faith or fold, or be eliminated from the nation-Nigeria. They, therefore, see members of other religions as opposites that cannot co-exist with them in the entity called Nigeria. With this negative ontological mindset, the adherents of Christianity and Islam live as if “co-existence and sharing of human interest is not possible with people who do not share one’s faith” (Simmel 157).

This paper does not agree with such an ontology that cannot see contraries or opposites as having the tendency to co-exist within a whole. The ontology rather sees opposites as contradictories that have no meeting point at all. It is to seek possible solution to this problem that this paper alludes to Ijiomah’s harmonious monism as a possible way out. The principle of unification in Ijiomah’s harmonious monism shows the possibility of the co-existence of contraries or opposites as complementary to each other, within a whole. It is this philosophical system that this paper sees as holding the key to the peaceful coexistence and mutual service of the existing religions in Nigeria. This paper will therefore argue that all the religions should be taken, if possible, by all Nigerians as complementary to each other in their search for the Ultimate Reality which occupies the central place in their belief systems and teachings. It will conclude that until the members of these religious groups see their religions as complementary to other religions in Nigeria they can never learn to live with them in a harmonious manner such that they could be national unity in the nation.

The Religious State of Nigeria: An Overview

Nigeria is a nation that is made up of three major religions namely, African Traditional Religion, Christianity and Islam. That is to say that Nigeria has always been a nation that is characterized by religious pluralism involving these three religions, which are paths towards a transcendental being called God (the Ultimate Reality). It has been observed that instead of members of these religious groups to see their religion as complementary in their quest for their understanding of God, they rather see their religion as contradictory to each other. It is on this note that they are engaged in the battle for superiority or supremacy. This quest tends to have no end in sight. However, Lucky U. Ogbonnaya notes that “Religion is indeed another factor that is detrimental to the existence of Nigeria. It is... a double-edged sword that appears to unite and divide members of the Nigerian society at the same time” (97). While religion unites it members on one hand, on the other, it brings about a deep divide between its members and nonmembers. This schism is to the point that they see themselves as irreconcilable enemies. It is this mindset that has led to the religious crises that are experienced from time to time within the country. This is also the view of Maduka who asserts that since Nigeria independence the country has come under strong religious crisis that has led to several riots and destruction of lives and properties (124). He also notes that these crises and riots are mainly caused by adherents of Christianity and Islam. Agi does not see this religious crisis as restricted only to Christianity and Islam, but that it also involves African Traditional Religion. According to him, there are six faces of religious violence in Nigeria, and
they include: Muslim-ATR, Muslim-Muslim, Christian-ATR, Christian-Christian, Muslim-Christian, Muslims-the rest of us (Political History 24).

Eze Felix Chibueze sees this to be a result of the failure of these religious groups to instill in the minds of their faithful, moral and spiritual consciousness as well as unity of purpose of their various religious faiths, which can in turn bring about a peaceful and united Nigeria (72). These religions do not foster peace and unity in the nation; they instead ferment violent and disunity among citizens of Nigeria. This is based on the fact that religious groups in Nigeria breed fanatics, who think of their religious faith above those of others and the interest of the nation. These fanatics can do anything to promote and protect their religious beliefs and teachings, even if it will lead to the split of the nation. It is with this mindset that these religious fanatics have helped to bifurcate and polarized the nation – Nigeria, instead of foster socio-political integration.

N. S. Iwe also has issues with the way religions in Nigeria have helped to weaken the socio-political unity of Nigeria/ns as he notes that “religious prejudice and arrogance give rise to dangerous polarization of religious affair. Religious prejudice beclouds spiritual vision, induces unjust discrimination and militates against social integration and solidarity” (Christianity, Culture 220). By implication, Nigeria has been so divided along religious line such that, one who is not of the same religion with another person is regarded as non-human or sub-human and unworthy to exist as a Nigerian. This is what has led to the ceaseless religious unrest in the country. It is this religious unrest that the country is experiencing today as found in the open rivalry between the adherents or faithfuls of Christianity and Islam in northern part of Nigeria. This is no good news to the country’s unity and progress. It leads to underdevelopment since there is massive loss of lives and properties. A case in point is the Boko Haran crisis experienced in Northern part of Nigeria today. The focus of this Islamic militant group is to Islamize Nigeria. The reason for their desire to Islamize Nigeria might be due to the fact that Nigeria is the giant of Africa and Islamizing it will act as a springboard to Islamizing other African countries. This is like the view of a Muslim leader quoted by Robert C. Douglas which reads, “unless we win London over to Islam we will fail to win the Western world” (15). Just as London is considered to be the gateway to Europe, that is how Nigeria is taken to be the gateway to Africa. Hence, they go all out to attack Christians and other non-Muslims residing in Northern Nigeria, with the aim of sanctifying Nigeria of non-Muslims.

Not only is this Islamic sect a threat to Christianity and other non-Muslims, it is also a threat to Islam itself. This is apparent in the fact that the sect attacks even Muslims who are given to Western education, which they hold to be influenced by the teachings of Christianity, which is to them ungodly. The main cry of Boko Haram include: the rejection of secularism, democracy, Western education, and Westernization. It is due to this that some Muslims that are top politicians are also the target of this Islamic sect. Religion has so influenced and blinded its adherents such that they are not concerned about the uprightness and capability of those that seats and man the leadership positions of the nation. All they are after is that the person manning this position should be a member of their religion. They can go all out to see that a member of their religion is brought into position of authority regardless of his/her incompetency. Iniobong Umotong corroborate this as he asserts

It (religion) is influential in deciding the political trend in any given society. Religion being an appeal to mind for certain social values in respect to the Supreme Being has grip on the reasoning and overt behaviour of every individual so colonized by the dictate of such religion. It is upon such values that the political engineering of such a people are tutored. (239).

It is the above kind of situation that has coloured and influenced the national politics of Nigeria. Nigerian political leadership is always a fight between Christians and Muslims who claims legitimate right to lead the nations. Hence, all political dispensations have always
either a Muslim president and Christian vice president or a Christian president and a Muslim vice president. Also, this inter-religious conflict does not only restrict itself to the struggle for governmental/political offices but has extended its grip to employment. People or Nigerians are no longer employed on merit but on religious ground.

All these depict exclusivism (in this context religious exclusivism). There is in Nigeria the rapid spread of the mindset of excluding members of other religion from the entity call Nigeria. This is influenced by the kind of ontology that informs Christianity and Islam – the two foreign religions that have come to stay in Nigeria. The ontology that guides the principle of operation is an exclusivist's ontology. It is an ontology that polarizes being and reality and sees an aspect of being or reality as superior to the other, which is regarded to be inferior and inconsequential. It is this ontology enshrined in the teachings of these two religions that influences their adherents to do anything to other Nigerians who do not share their religious faith in the name of religion. This is due to the fact that they see their religion as the only revealed religion from God and the only way to salvation, while others are idolatrous. Harold A. Netland captures the negative effect of this exclusivist mindset thus, “the inevitable result of such an exclusive view of God's revelation and salvation was to reject alternative religious practices and belief as idolatrous” (11). It is based on this that they seek to convert all to their faith or throw them out of Nigeria. Thus, their desire is to make Nigeria a single religion nation as against its diversity in religious belief and practice as Nigeria as always been. This is of the truth a faulty ontology that needs to be corrected. This may be possible through the ontology that will be articulated in the next section.

**An Insight into Ijiomah's Harmonious Monism**

Harmonious monism is a philosophical system developed by Chris O. Ijiomah, a professor of philosophy in the Department of Philosophy, University of Calabar. This system is believed by many to be a logical system. But this researchers see it to be ontological. It is ontological because it is concerned with the study of reality. It is centered on how Africans view reality. This does not imply that his ontology is just standing on its own. This ontology is one that has a logical undertone; it is built on logic - African logic. This logic is known as three-valued logic. This Africa-inspired three-valued logic is distinct from Western logic. This is because it does not follow the three principles of Western and in particular the principle of excluded middle. While Western logic does not see any meeting point of two extremes, African logic does. This logic holds that there is a meeting point between two extremes and it is at this point that reality appears to exist. These extremes are missing links that complement each other. They are what the other is not and stand next to the other. It is in this way that they complement each other (Ijiomah, *Contemporary Views* 45-46). Harmonious Monism operates with some principles that are distinct from the three laws of logic that is inherent in Western logic. These principles include the following:

i. **The Principle of Combination**: This principle holds that there is the combination of opposites. These opposites are combined not in the sense of intersection but in the sense of unification. In this context, seemingly opposing values, variables or entities are unified as one. That is to say, opposites are unified into an inseparable unity. In this summation, these opposites become a unified indistinguishable product called reality. Of this principle, Ijiomah avers: “the rule of union on complementarity says that all complements can unite without multiplying” (*Harmonious Monism* 126). Hence, “with the above, we can contrive a way of stating the fact that for any two ontological entities (classes) there is a third one which may be the sum, product, difference or the quotient of the two classes” (*Harmonious Monism* 127).

ii. **The Principle of Complementarity**: This principle stems from the belief that contraries that are unified are missing links, which are insufficient in themselves. They lack what the opposite other has and the opposite-other lack what they have. They, therefore, seek
their completeness in their opposite-other by combining with their opposites. In this principle, it is the insufficiency of the opposite other that brings about the need for complementation. For instance, the spiritual element of a reality is an incomplete entity that finds its completeness in the physical element of that same reality. In the same vein, the physical element of a reality is incomplete in itself until it is unified with the spiritual element of that same reality.

Thus, a reality in African harmonious monism is as a result of the complementary relationship between two seemingly opposing entities that are united as one. What is said here is that contraries as complements have the longing for unification with each other. This is because they are the other side of their opposites. They remain incomplete until they are unified as one. Following this, one will have no choice but to agree with Ijiomah that “it is only in this position that the extremes of reality can complement themselves freely and hence have equal freedom” (Harmonious Monism 134). However, “under the principle of complementarity the contents “M” and “S” which are contraries combine or complement themselves to produce (1) which is a... realized reality” (Harmonious Monism 129). It can be represented using set theory thus: $A \cup B = 1$.

Where, A and B are different entities within the same reality or universe of discourse. This African logic is represented by Ijiomah as follows: $M \cup S = 1$. Or $M \cup S = R$. Where, M = material phenomenon; S = spiritual phenomenon; R = reality; and 1 = universe of discourse or the totality of things. It is in this way that spirit and matter exist in the African conception of reality. They are one although a product of the combination of two complements that finds their completeness in each other. There are necessary opposite in the sense of being missing links to each other. According to Ijiomah, “when the missing links come together there form a unity” (Harmonious Monism 130). The above principles do not admit or follow the three Western laws of thoughts which include: law of identity, the law of non-contradiction and the law of excluded middle. These principles do not accept the co-existence of opposites. But the principles of harmonious monism do. According to Ijiomah, in African logic none of the extremes is forced on the other. Opposites are always harmoniously in monism. Neither of the opposites is inferior nor superior to the other. The only language that is heard is that of logic of reciprocity of talents. In such a situation there is no need to force oneself out of one's area of comparative advantage since everyone is recognized for what one is. Everyone at each time complements and is being complemented (Contemporary Views, 47).

That is to say, there is a co-existence of two entities within a reality. In this case, there is a monism that does not involve the reduction of one reality into another. Rather, it implies the complementation of two opposites or entities in one reality. This is captured by Ijiomah thus: “But in African logic, monism does not imply reduction of one reality to another. It is a unification of two or more things that complementarily realize themselves” (Contemporary Views 50). This makes harmonious monism the principle of unification. This is depicted as follows:

$(M \cup S) = R$

From the above analysis, it is apparent that African logic is not monolithic but harmonization of realities into monism. This is also known as ‘African duality’ (Eden 120). African duality (Harmonious Monism) is of the view that all realities are two dimensional. They all have two sides, just like a coin has two sides-head and tail. African reality has two dimensions or sides – the spiritual and physical. It is the co-existence of two entities within a reality that makes the reality an existent reality. Hence, African reality has spiritual and physical elements which combine and coexist in complementary manner. In this case,
“extremes meet” (Engel 50). It is the extremes of material (physical or matter) and spiritual (spirit) that meet to bring about the existence of reality. “Thus, in African view, every reality has both the physical and spiritual elements” (An Excavation 31). What we are saying is that reality is a phenomenon that is made up of visible and invisible aspects that are in harmonious complementary relationship, that is, a unity or unification of complementary opposites. Reality here is composed of material phenomenon and spiritual phenomenon. This depicts:

a situation where an object contains harmoniously two contraries and not contradictions.

The idea can be conceived when an African talks of vital force in physical or material body. In this connotation an object can both be spiritual and material. For example when an African presents a particular object as a reference for oath taking, he is implying that the object is both physical and spiritual (in Praise 143).

In line with this, he elsewhere notes that “This relationship between the empirical and the spiritual is what is implied in the proverb, ‘Ogu dina madu di na mmuo”’ (References, 78). This connotes that there is a strong link between human (physical) and the spirit (spiritual). Ijiomah notes that in African logic there is the harmonizing of opposites or complements such that, they become one. This interrelatedness is in a manner that we cannot talk about one without the other. That is to say, they exist for each other and in each other. They are the necessary complement of the other as well as bring out the reality of the other. It is in this light that “in African logic, the opposites exist harmoniously. The blind lives for the clear-eyed, the poor for the rich, the old for the young, Obu oria mere ka mata ihe bu ahu oma [it is ill-health makes it possible to identify good health]” (Harmonious Monism 116). Likewise, Obu ahu oma mere ka mata oria [it is good health that makes it possible to detect ill-health], the young lives for the old, the rich for the poor and the cleared-eyed for the blind. Thus, the being or existence of each aspect of reality is affirmed by the opposite other.

In African conception of reality, it is believed that realities are so inter-related such that we cannot take away one from the other. The being of an aspect of reality is intrinsically linked to the being of the other aspect of the same reality. One of these aspects of reality enters the other and the other enters it in a way that they become indistinguishable and inseparable. They are also seen to be always together even when in some cases one of them seems to be more prominent. It is in this sense that Ijiomah asserts that for the Africans, “every reality has both physical and spiritual elements. What qualifies or renders reality physical or spiritual is the reality's most prominent feature through which the reality exercises its force. This feature can be sensuous or non-sensuous” (Harmonious Monism, 99). Ijiomah sees this relationship as dovetailing of realities into each other. This is the cyclical nature of reality as conceived by the Africans. Substantiating this argument, Ijiomah notes “For Africans, in other words, reality is cyclical. The spiritual appears as physical reality and goes back to the spiritual world and the cycle continues. This means the physical has an inbuilt spirituality and the spiritual an inbuilt physicality” (Harmonious Monism 119). There is therefore an inseparable union or duality of reality. This is how Nigeria is expected to be, hence, the next section will try to articulate it.

The Religious State of Nigeria: Ijiomah’s Harmonious Monism as a Way Out

The Nigerian religious experience shows that although it is a multi-religious nation, it is still being hunted by the desire of some persons or group of persons to impose a particular religious faith on others. This, for them is the only way they can do a great service to God since they believe that it is only their religion that is the way to God – the ultimate reality. Since they see other religions as no path to God, they therefore aver that other religions are far from God and their beliefs are not the revelation of God. It is this desire to enthrone their
religion as a national religion that is the cause of religious fanaticism. Iwe brings out the
danger of religious fanaticism as follow:
Religious fanatics live at the lunatic fringes of the major world religions, especially
Christianity and Islam. Quite often these fanatics are law onto themselves.
Through their nefarious activities, the fundamental rights of innocent citizens are
often grossly and flagrantly violated: properties and lives are wantonly destroyed,
and places of worship desecrated and burnt (Religious Fanaticism 36).

He further notes:
The violation of human rights and the disruption of public order are consequently some
of the features of militant religious fundamentalism and fanaticism. Thus,
fanaticism is antithetical and imimical to all the positive values of modern
democracy which extol human dignity and human rights (Religious
Fanaticism,36-37).

All this is due to the desire of fanatics to reduce every religion in Nigeria into one religion
which they hold to be supreme and objective. This has resulted to series of religious crises in
the nation. Ephraim Ikegbo has narrowed down these religious crises to Christianity and
Islam as he notes that “in Nigeria, most conflicts today are caused by religious differences
being propelled by the two contending religions – Christianity and Islam their efforts to
dominate one another” (214). The above situation is a hindrance to national integration and
unity since there is disunity among members of the diverse religions that exist in the country.
They are not in harmony but in total disharmony with one another. This is a precarious
situation that is taking Nigeria to nowhere good. The reason is that disharmony or disunity
among most Nigerian citizenry acts as obstacle to national development in all spheres of the
nation’s life and being, since its citizenry lives in open opposition to each other.

There is therefore the need to restore harmony and unity among citizens of Nigeria
not minding their religious differences. There is the need to establish and reaffirm the fact that
Nigeria is a multi-religious nation. And it is through this situation that the nation can have the
unity that cannot be called to question. It is only in the face of the unity of all religions in
Nigeria that it can truly be said to be a nation – a collection of people with different religious
beliefs and background. It is also in this situation that most Nigerians can experience
religious liberty and freedom of worship. This is possible through the lessons derived from
Ijomah's harmonious monism. This ontological system is one that can help Nigerians realize
that they can peacefully co-exist with one another regardless of their religious differences. It
is a system that tries to harmonize and unify differences that are contraries. The contraries, in
this context, are the various religions in Nigeria.

The idea is that the basic tenets of these religions can be harmonized within Nigeria
in a very effective manner, by inculcating the teachings of the existing religions into the minds
of the citizens. This is what harmonious monism does and tries to do as it harmonizes and
unifies entities or realities that are contraries. This is based on the fact that individual
religions as human efforts towards the Ultimate are inherently insufficient in themselves to get
to their desired goal and therefore stand in need of complementation form each other. Thus,
none of these religions can exists alone. The truth is that all religions are interconnected to
each other in one way or the other. Hence, no single religion can claim to be the all-and-all
for the Nigerian society just as no individual is ego solus, since humans are interconnected to
one another and exist as community. In the same vein, no individual can be defined by a
particular religion since no religion can be self-sufficient for Nigeria/ns. All religions are
therefore deficient and stand in need of complementation from what they are not. They are in
need of their opposites to help meet their deficiencies. Nigeria is Nigeria, if and only if, it
remains religiously pluralistic. Nigeria/ns need(s) the teachings and belief systems of all the
existing religions within the country for its citizens (them) to have a holistic view or understanding of God and come to a fuller knowledge of their humanity and the nature of the nation they find themselves. This is possible only when adherents appreciate the complementary nature of each religion and its teachings in their lives, being, altitude and actions.

It is germane to state that all Nigerians cannot be forced or made to become members of a single religion since it is not in line with the nature of the ontology/mindset of Nigerians. Nigerians always have the mind that their belief system is insufficient and therefore long for other possible existing belief systems outside of theirs. However, to seek to reduce all religions into a particular existing religion in Nigeria is imposing a foreign ontological mindset on Nigerians. This is known as “subsumptive monism” which is “a reduction of one or more things into a single reality” (Ijiomah, Contemporary Views 49). It is a Western reductionist's mindset built on the Western reductionist's ontology. This ontology/mindset reduces everything into one. This cannot hold water in Nigeria and this is why Nigeria is experiencing religious crises. What Nigeria/ns need is “harmonious monism” - the co-existence of all religious beliefs and practices in a complementary sense such that all Nigerians can learn about other religious faith and appreciate them as well as be influenced by them. Hence, there can be the unification of two or more religions in the country such that their adherents can complementarily realize themselves, through the teachings of these religions. This unification is to take place in the minds of the individuals that make up the religions and the nation. They are the ones that should be exposed to all of the truths of each of these religious groups in the country.

Also, it is good to note that “all religions constitute, in the culturally and historically conditioned manner, responses for the same ultimate reality” (Netland xi). Since each religion is a respond to the ultimate reality, they are all means and diverse paths to this Ultimate Reality. Therefore, no particular faith should claim exclusive right to this reality just as Christianity and Islam try to claim. The adherents of these two religions have in history asserts that, their respective religions are the sole path to the Ultimate Reality independent of each other. They see other religions as nonsensical, idolatrous and far from leading to God – the Ultimate Reality. It is good to note that just as no aspect of reality can be said to constitute reality (Ijiomah, Contemporary Views 49-50), no single religion can lead solely to God. They all stand in need of complementation from each other. This is simply because they are human means of reaching God. Inasmuch as human is in him/herself insufficient, his/her means of reaching God is insufficient too. Thus, they need to be complemented by other human means to God. This agrees with the assertion “there are many ways to get to God” (Netland 2). Hence, it is time “for different religion to stop fighting and competing with each other and to start working together to solve the world's many problems” (Netland 2-3).

Therefore, it is germane to state here that Nigerians, all this while have operated with a reductionist mindset and ontology. They have always seen other religious faiths and their teachings as contradictory to their faith and hence should be rejected and their adherents converted to their own faith. This ought not to be so from the lessons derived from Ijiomah’s harmonious monism. It is now time for Nigerians to know that if religions are seen as contraries to each other they can be harmonized in any individual and the country. With this, Nigerians need to see religions as contraries and complements that can be complemented and harmonized in the Nigerian citizens. This will be possible when no one sees his/her religion as superior and those of others inferior.

**Conclusion**

Nigeria has always been characterized by religious pluralism and must remain so, if the unity of the country must be maintained. Therefore, there is no need of trying to convert the entire citizens to a particular religious faith. Trying to convert all to a particular religion is impossible
in a country like Nigeria where everyone lives with the consciousness that he/she has the right to freely practice his/her religion. However, an individual can be a member of a religion and stand in a good relationship with members of other religions. Hence, an individual who is a member of a particular religion can be of that religion and at the same time learn about the other existing religions within the country. Thus, one can say that each of the religions in Nigeria has been harmonized into a monism. The individual is the monism. This is simply because such an individual lives and exhibits the virtues of these religions. Hence, the monism is the individual who is a reflection of the combination all the teachings of the religions in Nigeria.

One can also explain the idea of monism as a possible harmonizing of all the existing religions together as one, in that every Nigerian has a fair or good knowledge of them all and is influenced by their tenets. The monism is the country since the country houses all of these religions which adherents do imbibe and exhibit the teachings of the religions. Here, all the religions are to be taken to be complementary to each other in their search for the Ultimate Reality, which occupies the central stage in their belief systems and teachings. It is until the members of these religious groups see their religions as complementary to other religions in Nigeria they can never learn to live with those of other religion in a harmonious manner that leads to unity or monism. Until Nigerians begin to see other religions and their adherents as complements to themselves will there be peaceful co-existence and a favourable environment and condition for development.

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